

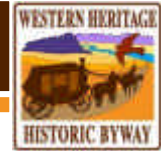
Western Heritage Historic Byway

# Corridor Management Plan

September 2004



Prepared by Planmakers and J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc.



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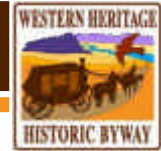
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## 1. Acknowledgements

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*“Roads no longer merely lead to places; they are places.”*

John Brinckerhoff Jackson

### *Byway Planning Team*

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## **2. Executive Summary**

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*“Our destination is never a place, but a new way of looking at things.”*  
Henry Miller

America's byways represent a rich collection of diverse landscapes, treasured places, and remarkable local stories. The Western Heritage Historic Byway begins on Idaho State Highway 69 (SH-69) near the southerly Meridian boundary and extends for 40 miles to Swan Falls Dam through high desert beauty abundant with historic, scenic, and geologic wonders. It is only one of six historic byways authorized by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD).

### ***Project Overview***

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Over 100 years ago, Kuna was the hub of the Treasure Valley. Before I-84, the Silver Trail provided a vital transportation link between the mining activities between Idaho City and Silver City in the Owyhees. Fifteen Mile Station, built on the current Kuna town-site, served teamsters moving machinery to the mines and stagecoaches traveling from Fort Boise to Winnemucca, Nevada. In later years, Kuna became the railhead camp established during the construction of the Oregon Short Line Railroad. With the coming of the railroad in the 1880s, Kuna became the center of commerce for the Treasure Valley.

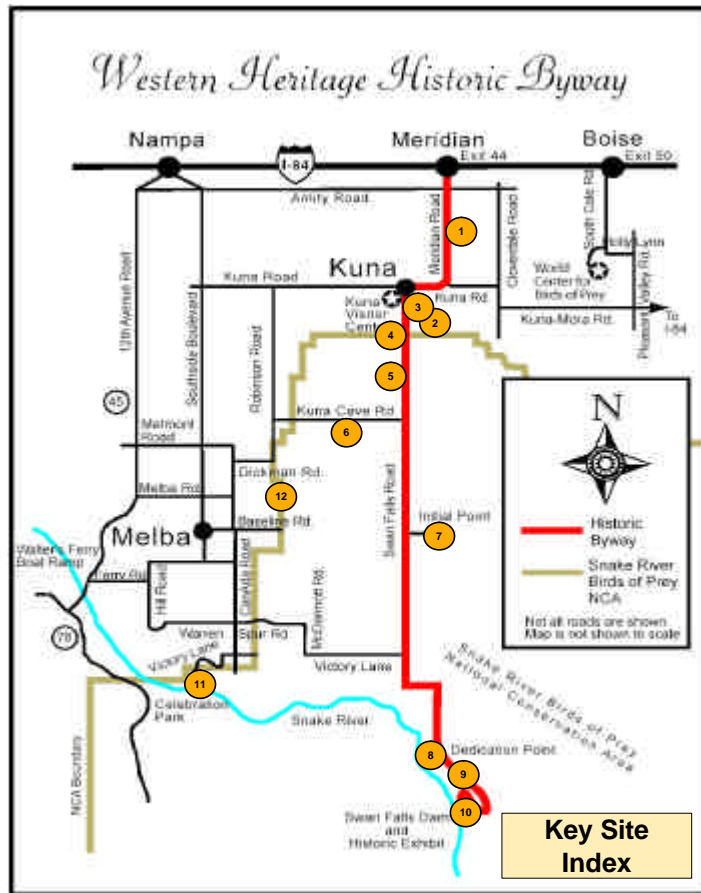
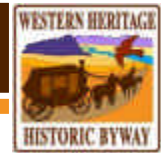
Even before historic times, Native Americans, rock formations, landscapes, and unique flora and fauna gave us many stories and mysteries that we are only uncovering and exploring today. The 485,000-acre Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (BPNCA), established in 1993 and managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), is one of 13 federally designated national conservation areas in the country. Recent BLM studies suggest that nearly 200,000 visitors will soon be traveling the byway to experience the wonder of raptors and the scenic Snake River Canyon. With this daunting information and awareness of the area's offerings, the beginning of a byway was initiated by a small group of Kuna citizens and officials.

Eventually the Western Heritage Foundation was established to study a future byway and seek funding. Their work culminated in the state designation of the Western Heritage Historic Byway and funding for a Corridor Management Plan in 2003.

### ***Interpretive Sites and Map***

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After considering many sites, the Byway Planning Team selected 12 priority resource sites, which are listed below and detailed in Chapter 3.



### Key Site Index

Site #1–Byway Orientation Portal
Site #2–Pioneer Cemetery/15-Mile Station
Site #3–Kuna/Indian Creek Visitor Center
Site #4–Silver Trail
Site #5–Snake River BPNCA/Pullout
Site #6–Kuna Cave
Site #7–Initial Point
Site #8–Snake River BPNCA/Dedication Point
Site #9–Snake River BPNCA/Three Pole
Site #10–Swan Falls Dam
Site #11–Celebration Park
Site #12–Melba Loop

## The National Scenic Byways Program



The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve, and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has provided funding for almost 1,500 state and nationally designated byway projects in 48 states. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities.

## The Idaho Scenic Byways Program



Idaho has had Scenic Routes since 1977. In 1995, the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee was established by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). Today, Idaho has 25 designated byways with 1,875 miles of highway leading to Idaho's special places. Each route must be separately identified with a route name on a pictorial sign.





### *Purpose of a Byway Corridor Management Plan*

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A corridor management plan is required as part of a byway's designation. This planning document provides a local and consolidated vision for the byway. In addition, the plan provides:

- Written history of the planning process and byway goals.
- Prioritized list of interpretive sites and projects.
- Analysis of the physical condition of the byway and its safety.
- Services and facilities that are in place and that are needed to meet the expectations of visitors, local residents, and businesses.
- Strategies to promote the corridor balanced with the care and conservation of the valuable historic, scenic, and cultural resources.
- Management strategies.
- Funding sources.

### *Byway Planning Process*

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*"The beauty is the process, not the product. It increases ownership and involvement in the byway. A lot of people become a part of it."*

Dr. Ruth Hawkins

From the beginning of the project, extensive public participation was important. The Western Heritage Foundation invited a diversified group of individuals representing a myriad of local interests and agencies to help develop the corridor management plan (see Acknowledgments). All byway meetings were held in Kuna at the Senior Citizens Center and open to any interested person or agency.

### **Western Heritage Historic Byway Planning Team**



The Western Heritage Historic Byway Planning Team consists of 29 members representing a diversity of regional agencies and interests. The team has been diligent, generous, and committed throughout the byway planning effort to develop a management plan that respects multiple interests, opportunities, and constraints.



## **Community Involvement Activities**

Byway Bus Tour	On Saturday, November 22, 2003, nearly 30 intrepid members braved a cold and windy day to tour the byway. It was a long and rewarding day. Each site was visited and evaluated for its contribution to a "historic" byway. All interested persons were invited to attend.
Open House	On April 8, 2004, from 6:00-7:30 pm, an open house was held at the Kuna Public Library to preview the corridor management plan. Comment sheets were made available and newspaper notices in <i>The Kuna Melba News</i> and <i>The Idaho Statesman</i> provided public notice. In addition, door hanger notices were provided throughout the Kuna community.
Newspaper Press Releases	<i>The Idaho Statesman</i> provided front page (local section) coverage of the Western Heritage Historic Byway planning that was underway. On Thursday, April 8, 2004, coinciding with the open house, an extensive article provided excellent byway coverage. (See Appendix).

## **Byway Vision and Goals**

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### **Vision Statement**

The Western Heritage Historic Byway, where the Stone Age meets the Age of Energy, will provide to all visitors a unique opportunity to learn more about Idaho's pioneer history, gain a deeper appreciation of the state's archaeological past, and provide an engaging discovery of Idaho's high desert wildlife, its night sky, and geology in a pristine high desert setting.

### **Mission Statement**

To protect, enhance, and achieve responsible stewardship of the wildlife, land, archeology, and geology along the Western Heritage Historic Byway.

### **Goals**

- To preserve, enhance, and showcase select geologic, wildlife, scenic, historic, cultural and recreational resources along the byway, while respecting local residents and lifestyles.
- To attract local, regional, national, and international visitors to southwest Idaho to enjoy rewarding and memorable experiences of the people and places along the byway.
- To provide visitor services that consider access, safety, and convenience for people of all ages.
- To maintain the byway's unique cooperative partnership of local, state, private, and federal agencies in implementing byway improvements.





### 3. Resource Management Strategies

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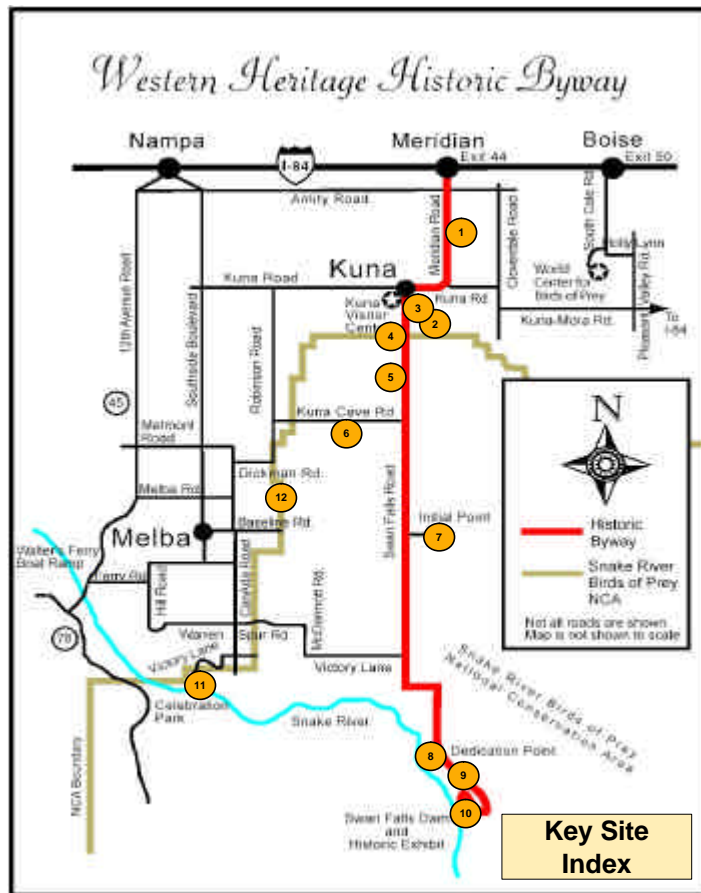
The Western Heritage Historic Byway possesses a rich collection of historic, geologic, and scenic sites that tell the unique story. These points of interest have been separated into Landmark Sites and Wayside Sites depending on the site characteristics and contribution to the byway story. Typically, a Landmark Site provides interpretive signs, restrooms, drinking water, and recreational vehicle (RV) and auto parking. Wayside Sites include interpretive signs and parking.



Twelve key sites have been identified for phased improvement along the 40-mile Western Heritage Historic Byway (WHHB). At these sites, visitors will be provided with turnouts and parking designed for traveler safety and viewing pleasure. Interpretive displays at these byway sites help educate the traveling public on the area's history, geology, and culture. At some locations, nature trails are available to add further to the high desert experience. Other

locations of the byway offer stunning views directly from a vehicle window.

In order to prioritize the many recommended byway improvements, the Byway Planning Teams informally rated each site for its historic, geological, scenic, and cultural significance and assigned a high, medium, or low for its contribution to the byway vision. Each site's assigned contribution rating and other pertinent information is presented in this section.



### Key Site Index

Site #1–Byway Orientation Portal
Site #2–Pioneer Cemetery/15-Mile Station
Site #3–Kuna/Indian Creek Visitor Center
Site #4–Silver Trail
Site #5–Snake River BPNCA Pullout
Site #6–Kuna Cave
Site #7–Initial Point
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Site #10–Swan Falls Dam
Site #11–Celebration Park
Site #12–Melba Loop



## *Overall Corridor Design Strategies and Recommendations*

### **Strategies for Improving and Enhancing the Byway**

Entrance Portal	The byway orientation site will be located at mileposts 6 to 7 southbound on the west side of SH-69. From here, one can view Initial Point, the Owyhee Mountains, and the Boise Front. A byway portal sign will be located at the site.
Directional Signing	Guide and byway signs will identify byway sites. The existing byway logo will provide continuity and easy recognition.
Visitor Information Centers	It is recommended that the Indian Creek site in Kuna, Dedication Point, Swan Falls Dam, and Celebration Park offer facilities and staffing for visitor orientation and information.
Key Site Development	Key sites will be improved based on priority and available funding. Needed improvements will be made to key sites, providing consistent standards for access, interpretation, and on-site amenities. Key sites will be identified by a number on maps and at each site. Security along the byway is an increasing concern and necessary management tool.
Interpretive Signage	Each site tells a piece of the story of the byway. Accurate and informative signage and displays are designed to stimulate interest. Part of the message is to educate visitors concerning the importance of sustaining the sites and maintaining the byway's environment.
Orientation Kiosks	Byway kiosks will be developed at key locations to provide orientation.



**Information  
Kiosk  
Examples**

Trailhead Development	Existing non-motorized trails and a number of new trails are proposed to highlight the visit to a number of the sites. There are opportunities to develop trails along segments of the byway.
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## Key Sites Recommendations

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The key sites are listed below with a short description of the existing facilities, priority ranking, management, proposed improvements, and costs.

### Site #1–Byway Orientation Portal

Location	Preferred location: West side of SH-69 southbound, between mileposts 6 and 7 at the rise of the hill.
Classification	Landmark Site
Priority Ranking	<b>High</b>  This scenic viewpoint plays an important role as the gateway to the Western Heritage Historic Byway and serves as a byway portal for the dissemination of initial information.
Existing Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Site</i>–Natural rise adjacent to SH-69 with views of Initial Point, Owyhee Mountains, and Boise Front. Once an agricultural area, the area around the City of Kuna is developing into subdivisions and large acreage ranchettes.</li><li>▪ <i>Access</i>–Substantial traffic, moving 55 mph, makes access an important consideration at the site. The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) requires 500 feet sight distance for a pullout onto SH-69.</li></ul>
Improvement Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Site Development Actions</i>–<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Acquire site.</li><li>2. Construct a pullout to serve as the byway orientation site, with spectacular views of the Owyhees and Boise Front. The facility will include interpretive panels, picnic tables, restrooms, parking, and an overlook. Visitor information highlighting the byway sites, trails, and mining history of the Silver Trail that extended through this region from Idaho City to Silver City. (See rendering.)</li><li>3. The parking area should accommodate three to four recreational vehicle (RV) spaces and 20 vehicles.</li><li>4. The City of Kuna, City of Meridian, and Ada County are encouraged to protect and preserve the historic barns and outbuildings along SH-69 through comprehensive plan policies and development ordinance incentives.</li><li>5. Every effort should be taken to restrict billboards and other visual pollution on SH-69 to meet the spirit of the byway and to be eligible for national recognition, if desired.</li></ol></li></ul>



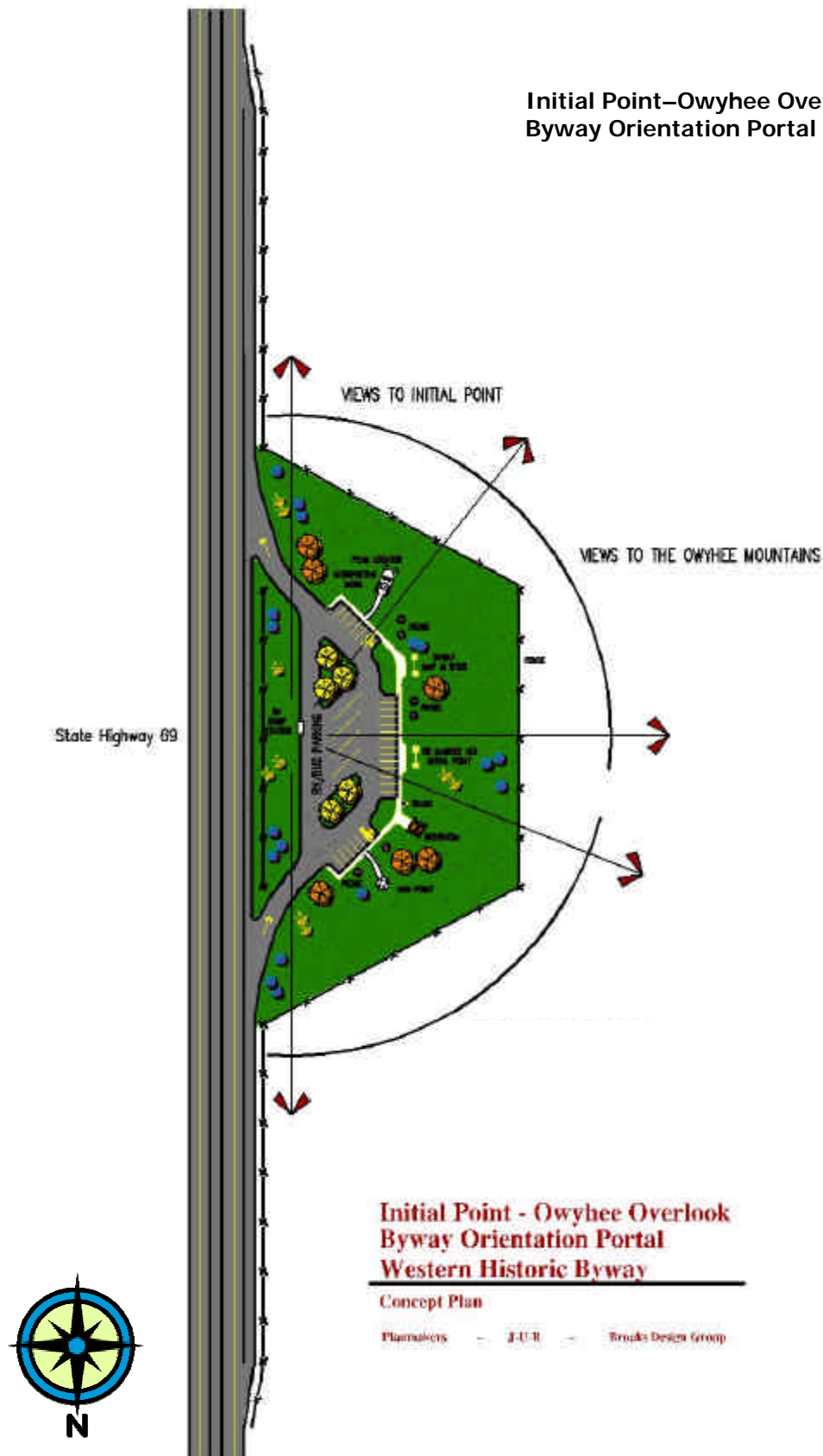
- *Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements*–See Table 1. Management and site development options include:
  - ♦ Idaho Transportation Depart (ITD)
  - ♦ Ada County
  - ♦ City of Meridian
  - ♦ City of Kuna
  - ♦ Other
  - ♦ Adopt-a-Site
  - ♦ Civic Clubs
  - ♦ Ada County Historic Preservation Council

**Table 1–Site #1 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

<b>Improvement Item</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>
Site Acquisition (2.5 Acres)	Donation
Amend Ada County and City of Kuna Comprehensive Plans and Development Ordinances to retain barns and historic buildings.	N/A
Portal Signs	\$4,000
Approach Signs (1 set)	\$1,000
Interpretive Kiosk and Site Improvements	\$335,000
Install Reproduction of ITD Historic Marker #193 Initial Point	\$1,000
Publish Byway Brochure	\$2,500
RV Dump Site	10,000
Restrooms	\$85,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$438,500</b>



**Initial Point–Owyhee Overlook  
Byway Orientation Portal**







## Site #2—Pioneer Cemetery/15-Mile Station

Location	Short Line Road, east of Swan Falls Road
Classification	Wayside Site
Priority Ranking	<b>Medium</b>



More than 20 graves in the old cemetery were mainly children killed by diphtheria in 1852. Susan Sweeney

Williams of Boise was one of the few who can remember the early railroad settlement that was located at a point near where the old Silver City trail crossed Indian Creek. She spent a year there with her uncle, W.P. Rowe, and family when she was 13. Several families lived at the station from 1880 until the station was abandoned in 1889 (*The Idaho Statesman*, December 3, 1950). All that remained of the Kuna Construction Camp was a sign board with name of Kuna and a graveyard as evidence of the diphtheria epidemic.

Silver Trail ruts can be found in Indian Creek, a place where crossing was possible because lava flow rock allowed fording the creek. Nearby is the foundation of 15-Mile station, later rebuilt as a home. Several families lived at the station from 1880 until the station was abandoned in 1889. The 15-Mile Station, built on the current Kuna town site, served the needs of teamsters who moved the machinery to the mines and stagecoaches traveling from Fort Boise to Winnemucca. In 1883, this site became the historic railhead camp established for construction of the Oregon Short Line Railroad. The opportunity existed to identify mining along the Boise Front, where gold was discovered in 1862 and the following year in the Owyhees. The river ford basalt provided a good bottom and illustrates how geology affects transportation routes.

### Kuna Rail Camp on the Oregon Short Line

*"No one remembers Kuna. It was a place where silence closed about you after the bustle of the train, where a soft, dry wind from great distances hummed though telegraph wires and a stage road went out of sight in one direction and a new railroad track in another; but that wind had magic in it. It came across immense dry areas without an object to harp upon except the man-made wires. There was not a tree in sight—miles and miles of pallid sagebrush: as moonlight unto sunlight is that desert sage to other greens. It gives a great intensity to the blue of the sky and to the deeper blue of the mountains lifting their snowcapped peaks, the highest light along the far horizon."*

Mary Hallock Foote  
*A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West*



Existing Conditions

- *Site*–Located close to Swan Falls Road, this site offers good views of Indian Creek and the Union Pacific Railroad main line. Wide panoramas are presented of Kuna and the Boise Front. A small graveyard with an interpretive sign is presently maintained by the Kuna Grange. This is currently an unimproved site with limited parking, curb, and gutter located on the south side of the road.
- *Access*–Located on Short Line Road, east of Swan Falls Road. The turn off of Swan Falls Road does not meet sight distance requirements.

Improvement  
Recommendations

- *Site Development Actions* -
  1. Install directional guide signing at the Short Line and Swan Falls Road intersection.
  2. Install interpretive panel on geological formation, mining, the Silver Trail, Oregon Short Line Railroad, and graveyard.
  3. Acquire property for parking and turnaround.
  4. Fence site to reduce access to the railroad tracks.
  5. Consider potential site acquisition of 15-Mile Station.
- *Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements*–See Table 2. Management options include:
  - ♦ Kuna Grange
  - ♦ City of Kuna
  - ♦ Adopt-a-Site Program
  - ♦ Civic Groups

**Table 2–Site #2 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Land Parking and Turnaround	Donation
(Future) Site Acquisition of 15-Mile Station	Donation
Directional Guide Signs	\$2,500
Interpretive Panel	\$5,000
Site Improvements	\$5,000
Fence	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,500</b>



### Site #3–Kuna/Indian Creek Visitor Center

Location	The northwest side of Indian Creek and Swan Falls Road.
Classification	Landmark site offering visitor information, interpretive signs, restrooms, drinking water, and parking.
Priority Ranking	<b>High</b>  This visible site plays an important role as the gateway community of the byway, including a portal to provide orientation. The potential exists to expand the site for the Kuna City Hall, Kuna Chamber of Commerce, and Kuna Historical Museum. These uses will reinforce the byway and provide excellent orientation to the area.
Existing Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Site</i>–This visible and well-located site is leased from the Union Pacific Railroad to the City of Kuna. It includes unimproved parking with two small buildings, which are occupied by the Kuna Chamber of Commerce and Snake River Raptor Volunteers (SRRV). Ada County Highway District (ACHD) has scheduled paving of the parking lot for October 2004. Restrooms are available in the Colonel Bernard Fisher Veterans Memorial Park, which features a greenbelt path along Indian Creek and a natural amphitheater. This is the last chance to get water as you enter the byway.</li><li>▪ <i>Access</i>–The approach is very close to the intersection of Swan Falls Road and Avalon Street, requiring quick decisions for unfamiliar drivers. Therefore, good signing is essential. Also, for safety reasons, Morris Court needs to be aligned with future access points to the visitor center. Lastly, a Fire Danger sign obstructs motorists' view of bike path users and needs to be relocated.</li><li>▪ <i>Note</i>: A new vehicular bridge over Indian Creek is anticipated in the near future. Final site development plans should coordinate with the new bridge location.</li></ul>
History of City of Kuna	<p>Kuna began life in the 1860s as a stage stop on the road that ran between Boise City and Silver City. In the early days, it was known as 15-Mile Station due to its location 15 miles southwest of Boise. It became a construction camp for the Oregon Short Line Railroad in 1881 and all freight and mail received at Boise/Silver City was hauled from there by freight teams and stage.</p> <p>During the years 1883 to 1887, supplies for Boise City, Idaho City, Placerville, Centerville, and Silver City were transported by freight wagon from the railroad at Kuna. There was so much activity at Kuna that it was considered the settlement that could be the successor to Kelton, Utah (another supply town farther south). But the early settlement of Kuna was short-lived as the need for a train depot there was unnecessary after the branch line to Boise was</p>



completed. Kuna came to life again when the United States Reclamation Service was established in 1902. The planned project sites included major reservoir development and expansion of the New York Canal system.

In the fall of 1903, Mr. and Mrs. Fremont H. Teed anticipated the coming irrigation trend and filed a 200-acre claim under the Desert Land Act, where Kuna stands. The promise of water brought numerous settlers to the area. Today, Kuna's history is a reminder of the railroad and irrigation history of southwest Idaho.

#### History of Irrigation and Indian Creek

Throughout southwestern Idaho, and along the Western Heritage Historic Byway, a network of canals and laterals defines the landscape. All who farmed in southwestern Idaho and surrounding semi-arid Western lands shared a common bond in learning to adapt the realities of the harsh, sometimes unyielding environment. They also shared the national belief that humankind could harness nature's energy and resources for the common benefit, rather than completely adapting to the environment as it already existed. The vision of "making the desert bloom" became the driving force behind developing irrigated agriculture on a major scale in the arid West.

#### Improvement Recommendations

##### ■ *Site Recommendations -*

1. Install informational sign on Avalon Street before Swan Falls Road.
2. Upgrade interpretive signage for the byway, Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (BPNCA), City of Kuna, irrigation, and railroad history.
3. Pave parking area and landscape site. (*Note: ACHD will be paving parking lot in late 2004.*)
4. Align access point(s) with Morris Court (Market Street); move Fire Danger sign.
5. Prepare plans and feasibility for an expanded visitor center for the Kuna Chamber of Commerce and Kuna Historical Museum. Expand hours and have videos and brochures available. Consider including the Kuna City Hall.





6. Prepare a self-guided walking and auto tour to link the historic sites in Kuna to the byway. Local historic sites will be identified by local signage and a self-guided tour map prepared by the Kuna Historical Society.
- *Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements*–See Table 3. Management and site development options include:
    - ♦ Western Heritage Foundation
    - ♦ City of Kuna
    - ♦ Kuna Chamber of Commerce
    - ♦ Snake River Raptor Volunteers
    - ♦ Kuna Schools
    - ♦ Ada County Historic Preservation Council
    - ♦ Kuna Historical Society
    - ♦ Kuna Futures

**Table 3–Site #3 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Landscape Parking Lot	Donation
Acquire Adjacent Site for Future Expansion	Donation
Approach Signs	\$1,000
Interpretive Signs	\$15,000
Upgrade Visitor Center	\$100,000
Prepare Kuna Walking/Auto Tour Brochure	\$1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$117,000</b>





## Site #4–Silver Trail

Location Kuna Mora Road to Forrey Drive and south to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) viewpoint/trailhead.

Classification The site is classified as a Wayside Site, with interpretive signs, parking, overlook, and trail.

Priority Ranking **Low**

Stage lines were established between Idaho City and the Owyhee mines soon after Boise became the territorial capital in 1864. Pack trains were used between Idaho

City and Boise City, and then stages drove the rest of the way to Silver City. The Boise City/Silver City Road originally joined the old Oregon Trail on Boise's West Bench area. It ran southwest across the Snake River Plain to Reynolds Creek in the Owyhee Mountains. The road then followed Reynolds Creek to Silver City via Boonville. The road was part of a greater transportation corridor that joined the two largest western Idaho mining areas, Boise Basin and Owyhee, to each other and to commercial and mining interests in Nevada and northern California.



Existing Site/Access Conditions

- The rutted trail is on private home sites and public access is not realistic.

- The trail is observable from adjacent BLM property.

Improvement Recommendations

- *Site Recommendations–*

1. Construct parking area, viewpoint, interpretive signs, and trailhead on BLM property near Kuna Butte.
2. Improve access road to site.
3. Designate Historic Silver Trail on Ada County and City of Kuna Comprehensive Plan map.
4. Acquire conservation and public access easements to protect the trail from private development.
5. Investigate potential of RV site.

- *Management–*

- ♦ BLM
- ♦ Ada County
- ♦ City of Kuna
- ♦ Other





**Table 4—Site #4 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

<b>Improvement Item</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>
Guide Signs	\$4,000
Interpretive Signs	\$10,000
Parking—Viewpoint and Trail	\$10,000
Access Road Improvements	\$7,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$31,000</b>



### Site #5–Snake River BPNCA Pullout

Location Swan Falls Road

Classification Wayside Site

Priority Ranking **High**

The Snake River BPNCA was established by Congress on August 4, 1993, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing raptor populations and

habitats. The area was designated after years of planning and effort by Idaho citizens and organizations determined to preserve the critical raptor habitat, while providing for other compatible uses of the land.

The BPNCA is home to the largest concentration of nesting raptors in North America. It is one of 13 federally-designated national conservation areas in the nation, covering 485,000 acres along 80 miles of the Snake River.

The area also contains more than 800 prehistoric and historic sites, including Wees Bar Petroglyph Field with hundreds of rock art carvings, the ruins of the Halverson Bar mining settlement, and old farms and homesteads. Recreation opportunities available in the BPNCA include hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, motorcycle riding, boating, birding, as well as fishing for bass, catfish, and sturgeon on a magnificent and unsurpassed scale.

Existing Site  
Conditions

- *Site*–Gravel roadside pullout with interpretive signs on hunting.
- The BPNCA is a major feature of the Western Heritage Historic Byway. Over 80% of the byway transects the BPNCA, offering opportunities to see a variety of raptors in an area supporting the densest population of breeding birds of prey in the world. Fifteen species of raptors nest there (golden eagle, prairie falcon, American kestrel, red-tailed hawk, ferruginous hawk, Swainson's hawk, northern harrier, barn owl, burrowing owl, long-eared owl, short-eared owl, great horned owl, western screech-owl, northern saw-whet owl, and turkey vulture). An additional eight species may be found there during migration and/or winter (bald eagle, osprey, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, northern goshawk, peregrine falcon, merlin, and gyrfalcon).
- *Access*–
  - ♦ Lack of shoulders on Swan Falls Road.
  - ♦ Good sight distance.





Improvement  
Recommendations

- ♦ No parking.
- ♦ Good potential for improvements.
- *Site Recommendations–*
  1. Expand interpretive signage on BPNCA and birds of prey.
  2. Expand site and parking.
  3. Build hands-on experience trails, including interesting geologic features such as rock outcrops and the cinder cone on the flank of Kuna Butte.
  4. Bring in large boulders of different rock types for interpretation.
  5. Replant vegetation to control noxious weeds.
  6. Expand education programs, tours, hikes, and management workshops.
- *Management–*
  - ♦ BLM
  - ♦ Adopt-A-Site Program
  - ♦ City of Kuna
  - ♦ Audubon Society

**Table 5–Site #5 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Build Hands-on Experience Trails	Volunteer
Bring In Large Boulders for Geologic Interpretation	Volunteer
Replant Vegetation; Natural Grasses	Volunteer
Expand Education Programs, Tours, Hikes, and Management Workshops	Volunteer
Interpretive Signage on BPNCA, Birds of Prey, and Fires	\$10,000
Expand Site and Parking	\$8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>



## Site #6–Kuna Cave

Location

Southern slope of Kuna Butte, five miles south of Kuna and 1.75 miles west of Swan Falls Road.

Classification

Wayside Site

Priority Ranking

**Medium**

According to early Kuna resident James Waring, Kuna Cave was located in 1979 by two cowboys who entered the cave by means of a rope. Other accounts credit the cave's discovery to Claude Gibson, a Boise lawyer, who discovered the cave in 1890 and explored it with a group of friends. Projectile points and other Indian artifacts have been found in the cave.



Waring described a visit to the cave for a local history of Kuna in the 1950s. He mentioned "Fat Man's Misery", an area of the cave so small that it dealt considerable discomfort to larger people visiting the cave. He wrote about finding nickels and dimes lost as former visitors to the cave struggled through this section of the cave.

Kunans have always journeyed to the cave for picnics, with school groups, or with friends. So integrated into the Kuna lifestyle, the high school teams are called the Kavemen.

Existing Conditions

- **Site**–Kuna Cave is a lava tube, about 1,000 feet long. A 35-foot steel ladder provides access into a dark chamber. A flashlight is recommended. The cave has been vandalized with graffiti, broken glass, and litter. Visitors need to wear gloves, kneepads, a helmet, and hiking shoes to protect themselves from cuts. A smoldering bonfire pit has blackened the walls and the smell of smoke requires visitors to wear a dust respirator.
- **Access**–Currently crossing private property and access is unmarked on Kuna Cave Road.

Improvement  
Recommendations

- **Site Recommendations**–It is suggested that visitors to Kuna Cave be discouraged until improvements can be made for safety and access. Other short-term improvements include:
  1. Site clean-up.
  2. Signs–No Littering, No Fire, Pack It In, Pack It Out, Dawn to Dusk Use, etc.
  3. Identify management team and short-term actions (BLM, Gem State Grotto Spelunkers, City of Kuna, Ada County Sheriff Department, Kuna High School, scout troops, J & M



Sanitation, and Western Heritage Foundation).

4. Enforce Idaho Code 18-7035 Damaging Caves statute.

■ *Site Recommendations*–Improvements

1. Relocate access road off of Swan Falls Road or Nicholson Road.
2. Establish parking area and surround parking and site with boulder fence.
3. Install directional signs, site rules, and interpretive sign.
4. Cave Restoration Program. Remove trash and graffiti, repair ladder, safety improvements, cave grate.
5. Trail system from parking area to cave and trail connections to Kuna Cave Cone, Kuna Butte, Initial Point, and proposed Jubilee Park in Canyon County.
6. Assure ongoing enforcement.
7. Close non-essential roads and re-vegetate site.
8. Establish tours and interpretive programs for the site.
9. Work with area youth to perpetuate a respect for public land and historic sites.

■ *Management*–

- ◆ Western Heritage Foundation
- ◆ BLM
- ◆ Maintenance and Enforcement Partnerships
- ◆ Adopt-A-Site Program
- ◆ Potential Partners–City of Kuna, Ada County, and Gem State Grotto Spelunkers
- ◆ Kuna School
- ◆ Other

**Table 6–Site #6 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Cave Rehabilitation	Volunteer
Trail Connections	Volunteer
Access Road	\$15,000
Parking Area	\$7,500
Site Improvements	\$7,000
Interpretive Signs	\$12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,500</b>



## Site #7–Initial Point

Location One mile east of Swan Falls Road on Baseline Road

Classification Wayside Site

Priority Ranking **High**

The prominent lava butte provided the starting point for the official land survey of Idaho. Established in 1867, a U.S. Geological Survey brass marker on the top is the beginning survey point in the State of Idaho. The Boise Survey Meridian runs north and south through this point and through the entire length of Idaho. The Idaho Baseline also runs east and west through this point. The City of Meridian is named for the survey line that follows along SH-69.



A dedication ceremony for Initial Point, attended by Governor Robert Smylie and other dignitaries, was held in 1963. Improvements included a new marker, a road up the butte, and a parking area.

Existing Conditions

- *Site*—At an elevation of 3,240 feet, Initial Point looms up out of the desert and presents panoramic views of the Owyhee Mountains and Boise Front. A one-mile gravel road connects Swan Falls Road to the base of the butte. A short walk up the rocky steep access trail brings visitors to an observation deck built in 1962. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) bench mark is missing. Some uses allowed on BLM properties may be incompatible.

- *Access*—Presently, access is unmarked. Sight distance to the south is poor, although it is good to the north on Swan Falls Road. For safety, the access entrance should be moved south to mitigate the sight distance issue.

Improvement Recommendations

- *Site Recommendations*—
  1. Relocate entrance to site.
  2. Pave entrance road.
  3. Develop trailhead area, picnic area, and signage.
  4. Provide parking for standard and oversize vehicles.





5. Reduce number of roads and restore habitat.
  6. Relocate target practice area.
  7. Replace USGS bench mark, install interpretive signage (geologic, historic, and identify views of Owyhees and Boise Front).
  8. Initiate re-dedication ceremony for Initial Point.
  9. Install interpretive sign on regional geology.
  10. Improve trails to viewpoint; consider GPS trail opportunity.
  11. Connect trails to Kuna Cave and proposed Jubilee Park.
- *Management–*
    - ♦ BLM
    - ♦ Idaho Society of Professional Engineers
    - ♦ Adopt-A-Site Program
    - ♦ Astronomy Groups
    - ♦ Land Surveyors Associations

**Table 7–Site #7 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Site Improvements	\$30,000
Access, Road, and Parking Improvements	\$100,000
Interpretive Signs	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>



## Site #8–Snake River BPNCA/Dedication Point

Location Swan Falls Road  
and the Snake  
River Canyon

Classification Landmark Site

Priority Ranking **High**

The construction of a visitor center for the BPNCA will greatly enhance the experience of Western Heritage Historic Byway users.



The singular nature of this region was perceived in the 1940s when it was realized that an estimated 1,000 pairs of raptors nested there. The BLM first granted special protection to these birds by creating a 27,000-acre natural area along the Snake River in 1971. Between 1971 and 1993, additional land was temporarily protected in recognition that habitat important to the raptor population included their hunting grounds adjacent to the river canyon. After extensive study, protection of the area finally became permanent when the 485,000 acres were added to the BPNCA system in August 1993.

NCA's are designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance, and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. They feature exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic, archeological, paleontological, historical, educational, and/or scientific resources. The BPNCA is one of 13 NCA's in the western states, and like most of the NCA's, it lacks a visitor center.

Existing Site Conditions Improved site with gravel parking, restrooms, trails, and interpretive signs, providing an outstanding view of the Snake River Canyon. During the spring this is a good place to spot birds of prey in flight. Interpretive signs describe plants, wildlife, and geology of the NCA and aid in bird identification. Look for prairie falcons, red-tailed hawks, and turkey vultures. Thousands of U.S. and international tourists enjoy this unique area each year. Great views of the Owyhees.

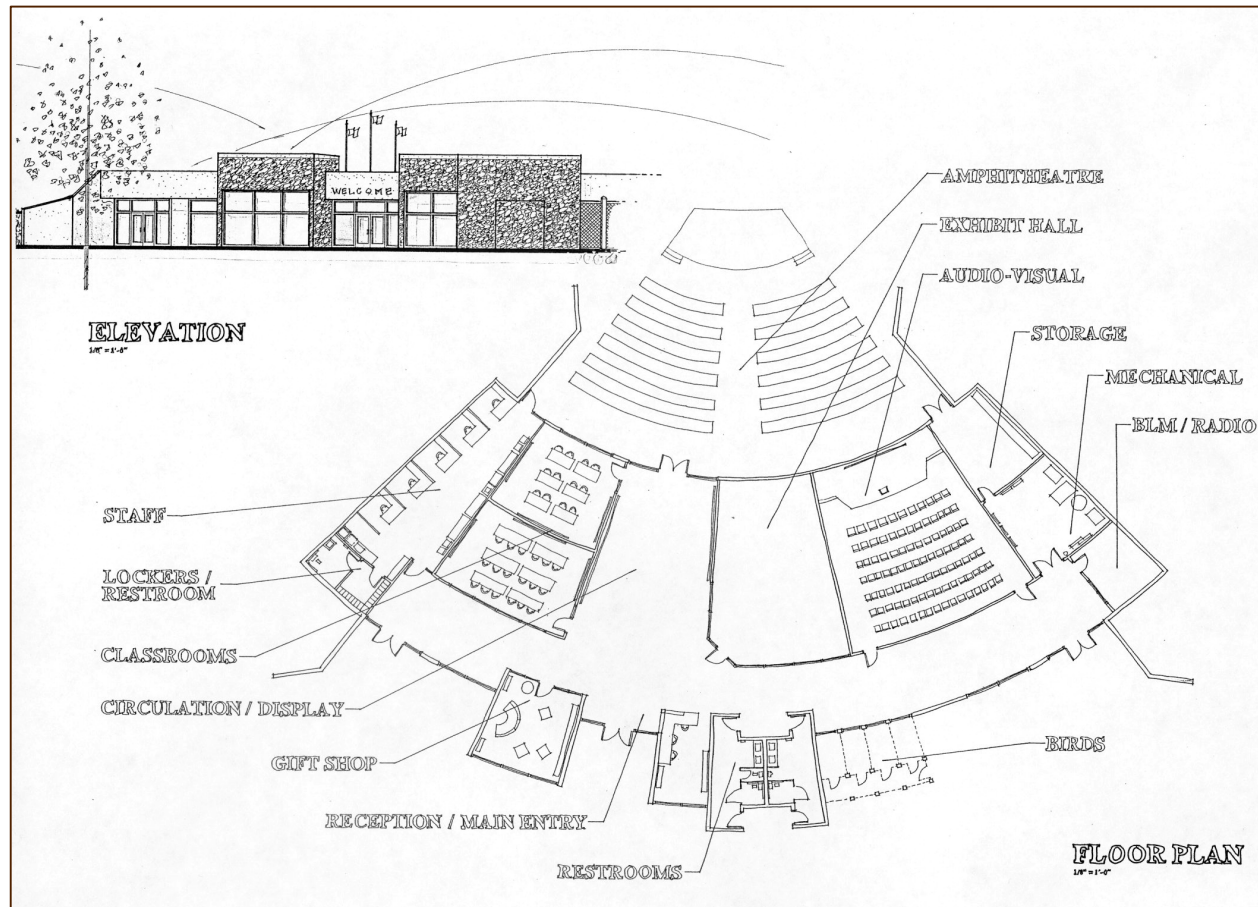
Improvement  
Recommendations

■ *Site Recommendations–*

1. BPNCA Visitor Center: A visitor center should be built at this site based on the model of the Red Rocks Canyon NCA Visitor Center, located in Nevada, in terms of displays, curriculum, staffing, and hours of operation. The center may be located near the canyon rim with large windows providing a view over the Snake River. The



legislative act that authorized the BPNCA allows for, but does not fund, a visitor center "to interpret the history and the geological, ecological, natural, cultural, and other resources of the conservation area and the biology of the raptors and their relationships to man."



Two NCAs currently have visitor centers that may serve as models for one in the BPNCA. The visitor center at Red Rocks Canyon NCA (RRCNCA) is considered to be the focal point for visitor orientation. The 7,600 square foot facility offers information and interpretation about recreation opportunities, wildlife, vegetation, geology, cultural resources, and much more. The center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily during the winter (November through March) and 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily during the summer (April through October). Scheduled curriculum-based activities are presented on- and off-site. The exhibit area features displays depicting the cultural and natural resources of the RRCNCA. The facility also offers a book and gift store operated by the Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association, a non-profit organization with the mission of researching and sharing interpretive



information about the RRCNCA. Proceeds from the bookstore support environmental interpretation of the Red Rock area. These efforts include programs, hikes, exhibits, signs, and publications. The book and gift store features unique items created by local artisans, jewelry handcrafted by Native Americans, books and maps pertaining to the area, as well as many other items.

El Malpais NCA in New Mexico also has a visitor center containing exhibits about volcanology, birds, plants, and the cultural and historical uses of El Malpais. The visitor center has a bookstore, picnic tables, plant garden, water, and restrooms. An eight-minute orientation video is available for viewing upon request. A short hiking trail takes off from the visitor center parking area providing a 45-minute hike to great vistas of the nearby area. The facility is open daily 8:30 a.m.

2. Add additional bus parking for school buses.
3. Larger restrooms needed.
4. Build trails down into the canyon.
5. Build additional windbreaks/small shelters to compensate for wind and summer sun.

■ *Management & Improvements*

- ◆ BLM
- ◆ Adopt-A-Site Program
- ◆ Congressional Delegation

**Table 8–Site #8 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

<b>Improvement Item</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>
Develop Trails/Shelters	Volunteer
Expand Parking	\$20,000
(Future) Visitor Center	\$1,120,000
Restrooms	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,190,000</b>



### Site #9–Snake River BPNCA/Three Pole

Location Swan Falls Road and Snake River Canyon

Classification Wayside Site

Priority Ranking **Medium**

This is an unimproved site, close to the road and canyon, with great views of Swan Falls Dam and the Snake River Canyon.

Existing Site Conditions Unimproved site.

Improvement  
Recommendations

▪ *Site Recommendations–*

1. With its close vantage to the canyon rim, this site accommodates people with impaired mobility to view the birds of prey. The pullout should be moved south from its present location about 0.1 mile for a better observation point.
2. Design and construct pullout.
3. Add interpretive signs.
4. Observation point.

▪ *Management–*

- ♦ BLM
- ♦ Adopt-A-Site Program
- ♦ Air National Guard Engineers

**Table 9–Site #9 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Pullout–Viewpoint and Signage	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>



## Site #10—Swan Falls Dam

Location Swan Falls Dam Site

Classification Landmark Site

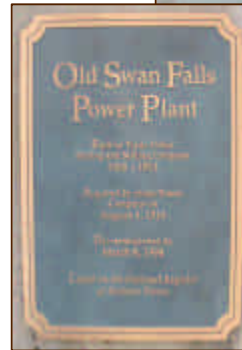
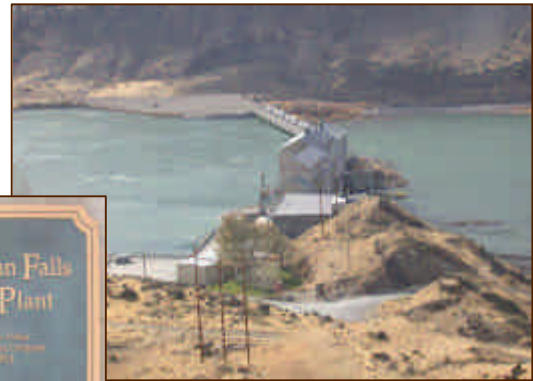
Priority Ranking **Medium**

Swan Falls Dam was built in 1901 as the first hydroelectric dam on the Snake River. Originally, the dam supplied power to gold and silver mines in the Owyhee Mountains. Eventually, it provided electricity for settlements and agriculture on the Snake River Plateau. The dam, operated by Idaho Power Company, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Swan Falls Dam  
History

Swan Falls Dam is evidence of the early history of hydroelectric power in Idaho. When large-scale lode mining came to Silver City, scarcity of wood or coal hampered development of major Florida Mountain silver properties, particularly the Trade Dollar and the Black Jack. Little timber grew in the area and shortage of fuel became a problem in generating power to run the mines. A power site for Silver City was first examined in 1894 when Boise mining engineer, Arthur Foote, set out to look for a good Snake River power site. Foote and A. J. Wiley, a young mining engineer, located a site only 28 miles from the Owyhee mines. Foote left Idaho to manage a mine at Grass Valley, California, but A.J. Wiley kept up his interest in Swan Falls. In 1898, a local electric plant began operation in Silver City, and Trade Dollar and Black Jack managers began to show interest in bringing power from Swan Falls.

In 1900, the dam was endorsed and construction was begun in the summer. Designed by A.J. Wiley, the dam was completed in 1901. In April, the Blaine and Black Jack mines began to utilize the electric power and Silver City switched from steam to electricity, becoming a modern mining camp.







**Existing Site  
Conditions**

In 1995, a new powerhouse was completed and the historic powerhouses were renovated into a visitor/interpretive center. The center provides a history of the Swan Falls Dam and hydro-electricity, plus information about the natural and cultural resources of the NCA. The facilities include restrooms, drinking water, a public telephone, and picnic area. The museum is not open regularly due to Homeland Security.

Recent improvements by Idaho Power include closing adjacent Idaho Power properties to the public in order to re-vegetate braided roads.

**Improvement  
Recommendations**

- *Site Recommendations–*
  1. Additional interpretive signs, picnic areas, garbage cans.
  2. Boat ramp upgrade.
  3. Expand restroom capacity.
  4. Add drinking fountains.
  5. Locate additional parking capacity.
  6. Close and re-vegetate a number of roads.
  7. Establish geologic trail and interpretive signs.
  8. Upgrade trail system connection to Celebration Park.
- *Management–*
  - ♦ Idaho Power Company
  - ♦ Museum Staff
  - ♦ Volunteers
  - ♦ Adopt-A-Site Program
  - ♦ BLM

**Table 10–Site #10 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Trails	Volunteer
Additional signage, picnic areas, garbage cans	\$25,000
Boat ramp upgrade	\$25,000
Restroom expansion	\$50,000
Drinking fountains	\$10,000
Parking expansion	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>



### Site #11—Celebration Park

Location	On the Snake River, south of Melba
Classification	Landmark Site
Priority Ranking	<b>Medium</b>

Existing Site Conditions

Canyon County Parks and Recreation staff interprets the Snake River Canyon's archeological and cultural history through tours and presentations. A short hiking trail leads visitors past petroglyphs carved on boulders by Native Americans and early settlers. The park's facilities include paved vehicle parking, an interpretive center, restrooms, picnic and camping area, boat launch, and atlatl range.

The Desert Institute, established in 1997, is a cooperative program between the Department of Anthropology at Boise State University and Canyon County Parks, Recreation, and Waterways. The mission of the Institute is a study of the Idaho desert and deserts worldwide.

A non-motorized trail along the north bank of the Snake River provides access upstream to Halverson Lake, a small pond nestled along the canyon wall. Other trails lead through the Bonneville Flood boulders scattered across Halverson Bar. These trails converge and can be followed upstream approximately 10 miles toward Swan Falls Dam. Visitors enjoy picnicking, camping, wildlife viewing, wildflowers, sagebrush, and wetlands.

Guffey Bridge, located at the downstream edge of park, provides one of the few crossings over the Snake River. The one-time railroad bridge, built in 1897, has been restored for non-motorized use and provides access to primitive trails on the south side of the river.





Improvement  
Recommendations

- *Site Recommendations–*
  1. Improve access road.
  2. Install guide signing back to Swan Falls Road, Melba, Kuna and Interstate 84.
  3. Improve trails to Swan Falls Dam.
- *Management–*
  - ♦ Canyon County Parks and Recreation Department
  - ♦ Eagle Scout Projects
  - ♦ City of Melba

**Table 11–Site #11 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

Improvement Item	Estimated Costs
Trail Improvement	Volunteer
Access Road	\$15,000
Guide Signing	\$2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,500</b>

## Site #12–Melba Loop

### Location

From Celebration Park to CanAda Road, Southside Boulevard, City of Melba, Melba Road, Dickman Road, Robinson Road, Kuna Road to City of Kuna

### Classification

Byway Loop

### Priority Ranking

**Medium**

- *Melba*–The small Idaho town of Melba is platted on Base Line Road and aligned to Initial Point. The community is also tied to the history of irrigation in southwest Idaho.

Melba was first known as Rock Spur, the headquarters for construction workers who were building ditches and laterals in conjunction with the Boise Project. In 1912, C.C. Todd purchased 160 acres of state land including the reclamation camp. He laid out a town site and named it Melba, after his daughter.

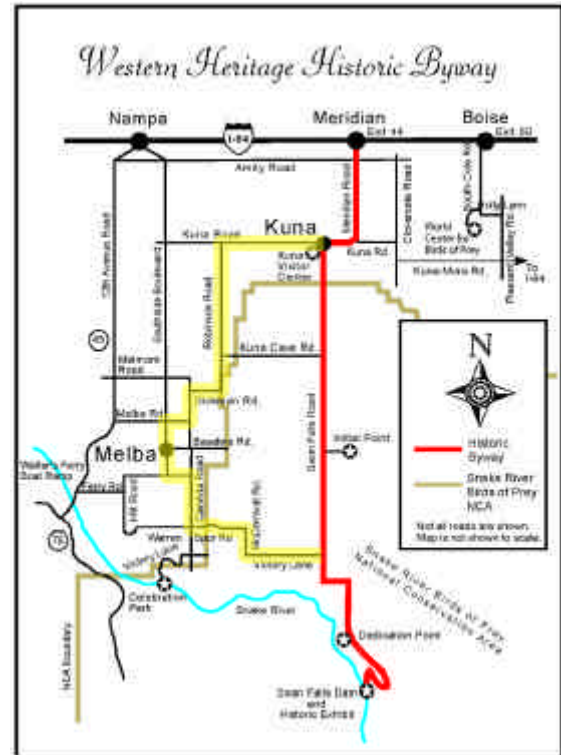
- *Reineke Barn*–Near Melba, one of the few remaining “Gothic Arch” barns can be seen on the Henry Reineke property. In 1916, *The Idaho Farmer* magazine predicted that the Gothic arch barn would become the most prevalent construction type for dairy barns. Nearly a century later, there are few remaining in the area.

### Existing Site Conditions

Rural two-lane roads connect geologic, historic, and scenic sites. Melba commercial services include restaurants, gas, groceries, and services.

### Improvement Recommendations

- *Site Recommendations*–
  1. Install byway guide sign loop back to Kuna.





2. Prepare a self-guided walking and auto tour to link the historic sites in Melba to the byway. These local historic sites would be identified by local signage and a self-guided tour map prepared by the Melba Historical Society. It will include the 1913 Conyers Store, 1914 Dewey Harris Store, 1919 IOOF Hall/Old Gardner Hotel, 1915-1916 Legion Hall/first School, 1920 High School, 1936 WPA Red High School, and U.S. Reclamation area.
  3. Support new Jubilee Canyon County Park with trail to Initial Point.
  4. Upgrade restrooms at Melba City Park.
- *Management–*
    - ♦ City of Melba
    - ♦ Canyon County

**Table 12–Site #12 Priority, Management, and Costs of Site Improvements**

<b>Improvement Item</b>	<b>Estimated Costs</b>
Loop Guide Signs	\$6,000
Melba Walking/Driving Tour Map	\$1,000
Upgrade Melba Restrooms	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$57,000</b>



## ***Byway Signage Plan***

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A critical component of the byway is the development of visitor interpretation at the 12 sites. Together, the sites will tell a story of the byway's heritage, nature and culture. It is the goal of the Corridor Management Plan to identify and develop a unified sign plan that is easily understood as well as successful at giving good, detailed direction.

The Byway Signage Plan involves upgrading guide signage along the corridor and at byway sites. Improved guide and interpretive signage for the 12 sites along the byway is a top priority. Another key recommendation is the construction of a Byway Orientation Portal heading southbound on SH-69.

### **Byway Orientation Portal**

As illustrated, the new pullout, heading south on SH-69 would provide spectacular scenic views of the Owyhees and Boise Front, while disseminating initial information to visitors. The byway portal signs would feature a byway map, information on each site and visitor information contacts. Orientation aids visitors in planning their schedules, providing for the trip and safety messages.

To commemorate the byway's history, a stone orientation kiosk, similar to those built at ITD rest areas is proposed. The stone kiosk, with interpretive panels will provide information on the Silver Trail, mining in the Boise Front and Owyhees, area geology and the byway. See byway site 1.

### **Western Heritage Historic Byway Logo**

Since 2003, the colorful Western Heritage Historic Byway logo has been installed along the byway. The logo has been utilized in numerous Kuna publications and is recognized by the local community. The byway logo would be added to all directional signs and used extensively to unify all aspects of the byway, from promotional strategies such as brochures, advertising, etc, to signage at each key site.

### **Byway Site Signs**

A three-by-three foot Western Heritage Historic Byway sign with the logo will be located at each of the 12 sites. Site signs are strategically located to help visitors navigate the byway and discover opportunities, such as trails, overlooks, and picnic areas. Consistent style and placement of signs will assist visitors in recognizing that they are approaching a byway facility even before the sign can be read.

### **Advance and Turn Signage**

Located approximately 1/4 mile ahead of the entrance to each key site, a byway logo sign alerts visitors. At the entrance to each key site, a byway turn sign indicates the entry.





## Directional Signing



Directional signing is needed to help direct the visitor to a number of the byway sites. In some instances, such as Celebration Park, return signs are needed to help the traveler return to the highway. Nationally approved symbols for information, recreation and cultural facilities should be incorporated whenever possible. These symbols help accommodate international travelers.

## Mileposts

Mileposts at the end of each mile are to be maintained to help identify the distance along the byway.

## Interstate 84 (I-84) Interchange 44 Byway Guide Signs

Existing brown and white scenic attraction guide signs for the Birds of Prey Dedication Point on I-84, shown above, should include supplemental Western Heritage Historic Byway signs.

## Interpretive Signs

Interpretive signs, overlooks, and other facilities provide opportunities for visitors to experience the setting while learning about the byway corridor. Well-designed signs can reach a wide audience and enhance the visitor's experience and awareness. Additional interpretative signs are proposed that inform travelers about the byway's historic, geologic, natural and cultural significance, instilling respect for what they are seeing and experiencing. Maps will provide a view of a 10 to 15 square mile radius around the site and a close-up view of the facilities offered at the site. New interpretive signs would be similar to byway orientation kiosk, using log construction, metal straps, porcelain enamel or fiberglass signs in metal frames and stone foundation. These signs will be the first line of contact for most visitors and are to be protected and maintained.



## 4. Highway Safety and Management



The Western Heritage Historic Byway spans more than 40 miles, beginning at the southerly city limits of Meridian and proceeding south through Kuna, turning south on Swan Falls Road to the Swan Falls Dam area. The main byway travels on four separate roadway segments:

1. South Meridian Road (SH-69)– from Meridian to Avalon, the city limits of Kuna (principal arterial).
2. Swan Falls Road from Avalon (Kuna Road) to King Road (minor arterial).
3. Swan Falls Road from Kuna Road to King Road (minor arterial).
4. Swan Falls Road from King Road south to Swan Falls Dam (collector).

In 2001, SH-69 was improved to five lanes and generally provides a safe, but fast-moving traffic corridor accessing the developing areas of south Ada County, Meridian, and Kuna. The speed limit is 55 miles per hour.

SH-69 has adequate horizontal alignment with some vertical grades. The roadway is well maintained by the Idaho Transportation Department. Roadway widths are adequate for the entire SH-69 route segment.

### *Level of Service*

The level of service (LOS) is a measure of the roadway's adequacy for the amount of traffic present. It is usually measured at the worst traffic times, or the peak hour, and is commonly thought of as an evaluation of the amount of delay that a motorist experiences due to the roadway design geometry and under varying traffic volumes. Three parameters are used to describe LOS: the average travel speed, the percent time delay, and the capacity utilization.

LOS	Description	Time Spent Following (%)	Average Travel Speed (mph)
A	Free flow. This rating represents the highest quality of service; speeds are controlled by driver's desires.	<35%	>55
B	Reasonably free flow. Drivers are delayed up to 50% of the time in groups. The need for passing to maintain speed becomes significant.	35-50%	50-55
C	Stable traffic flow. Drivers are delayed up to 65% of the time in platoons with a larger group. Unrestricted passing demand exceeds passing capacity. Congestion is due to turning traffic.	50-65%	45-50



D	Approaching unstable traffic flow. Passing becomes extremely difficult. Passing demand is high, but passing capacity approaches zero. Turning vehicles cause a wave in the traffic stream.	65-80%	40-45
E	Unstable flow. Passing becomes nearly impossible, and platooning becomes intense. Interruptions encountered are due to turning or slow vehicles.	>80%	<40
F	Forced or heavily congested flow. Volumes are lower than capacity, and speeds are highly variable.	–	–

Source: Highway Capacity Manual (2000)

Notice that as traffic volumes increase, the travel speed decreases and delay for motorists increases. Observing traffic on the Western Heritage Historic Byway, the traffic volumes have been compared with the capacity of the facility. LOS is anticipated to be high with motorists able to travel at comfortable speeds without many restrictions due to the roadway or to traffic volumes.

Specific segments of grade, roadways within cities, and intersections within these roadway segments may have differing LOS. The table to the right lists roadway segments along the byway with their associated LOS rating.

Road Name	From	To	LOS
SH-69	I-84 EB/Ramp	Overland Road	E
	Overland Road	Victory Road	C+
	Victory	Amity	A
	Amity	Lake Hazel Road	A
	Lake Hazel Road	Columbia Road	A
	Columbia Road	Hubbard Road	A
	Hubbard	Deer Flat Road	A
	Deer Flat Road	Kuna Road	C+
E. Kuna Road	SH-69	S. Swan Falls Road	C+
S. Swan Falls Road	E. Kuna Road	Swan Falls Dam	A

Source: The Ada County Roadway Capacity Guidelines for Planning Applications, COMPASS

## Swan Falls Road

Ideal conditions for a two-lane roadway would be to accommodate speeds of at least 60 miles per hour, lane widths of 12 feet, shoulder widths of six feet, zero no-passing zones, passenger cars only, a 50/50 directional split, level terrain, and no impediments to through traffic (no turning vehicles). This perfect roadway does not often exist in large continuous segments. The perfect roadway has a capacity of 2,800 passenger cars per hour in both directions. The Swan Falls Road portion of the byway has few trucks, narrow shoulders, inclines, and intersections. All these features—many unavoidable—will degrade the LOS. The byway generally has traffic volumes low enough to allow motorists the freedom of movement and, consequently, LOS values are high.



## *Traffic Patterns*

The average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes are listed below:

As expected, higher traffic volumes are concentrated around the two major population centers, Meridian and Kuna.

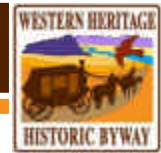
Road Name	From	To	AADT
SH-69	I-84 EB/Ramp	Overland Road	39,000
	Overland Road	Victory Road	22,000
	Victory	Amity	18,000
	Amity	Lake Hazel Road	16,000
	Lake Hazel Road	Columbia Road	14,500
	Columbia Road	Hubbard Road	13,000
	Hubbard	Deer Flat Road	12,000
	Deer Flat Road	Kuna Road	8,000
E. Kuna Road	SH-69	S. Swan Falls Road	8,000
S. Swan Falls Road	E. Kuna Road	Swan Falls Dam	1080

## *Safety Issues/Locations*

The vehicular traffic on SH-69 is aggressive and traffic will increase as new and anticipated residential development occurs. There are two signalized intersections at Overland Road and Amity. Cross-street turning movements occur frequently at section line roads. The byway anticipates a byway portal site with information and parking on the west side of SH-69 at approximately Lake Hazel Road. Where access to the portal orientation site from SH-69 is suggested, adequate room should be provided for acceleration and deceleration for vehicles entering and exiting from the flow of traffic.

A collision rate was calculated for each segment and intersection of the byway (see the tables on the next page), based on the number of reported accidents per million vehicle miles. Collision rates are developed to compare the safety of roadway segments and intersections with the influence of the traffic volumes.

Several isolated locations do not possess a remarkable collision rate, but are detrimental to the traveling public due to geometric deficiencies of either horizontal or vertical nature.



**Western Heritage Historic Byway Road Segment Crash Data Summary**

Road Name	Segment		Total Crashes	Million Vehicles Per Year	Million Vehicle Miles per Year	Collision Rate*
	From	To				
SH-69	I-84 EB/Ramp	Overland Road	3.2	14.2	1.8	1.8
	Overland Road	Victory Road	3.2	8.0	8.0	.4
	Victory Road	Amity	2.4	6.6	6.6	.4
	Amity	Lake Hazel Road	1.6	5.9	5.9	.3
	Lake Hazel Road	Columbia Road	.8	5.4	5.4	.1
	Columbia Road	Hubbard Road	1.6	4.8	4.8	.3
	Hubbard	Deer Flat Road	4.8	4.5	4.5	1.1
	Deer Flat Road	Kuna Road	0	3.0	3.0	0
E. Kuna Road	SH-69	S. Swan Falls Road	2.4	2.9	2.9	.8
S. Swan Falls Road	E. Kuna Road	Swan Falls Dam	4.8	0.4	7.5	.6

\* Crashes per Million Vehicle Miles

Note: The crash data for SH-69 is from September 2001 (after improvements to the roadway were completed) to 2002. The crash data for Swan Falls Road is from 1998 through 2002.

**Western Heritage Historic Byway Intersection Crash Data Summary**

Road Name		Total Crashes	Total Years	Total Crashes per year	Million Vehicles per Year	Collision Rate*
Major	Cross Street					
SH-69	E. Kuna Road	1.0	1.25	.8	2.9	.3
	Deer Flat Road	7.0	1.25	5.6	4.5	1.2
	Hubbard Road	0	1.25	0	4.8	0
	Columbia Road	3.0	1.25	2.4	5.0	.5
	Lake Hazel Road	3.0	1.25	2.4	5.4	.4
	Amity Road	1.0	1.25	.8	6.7	.1
	Victory Road	1.0	1.25	.8	8.1	.1
	Overland Road	1.0	1.25	.8	14.2	.1
	I-84 EB/Ramp	4.0	1.25	3.2	14.2	.2
Swan Falls Road	King Road	3.0	5.0	.6	.8	.8
	Short Line Street	1.0	5.0	.2	.9	.2
	Avalon	3.0	5.0	.6	3.4	.2

\* Crashes per Million Vehicle Miles

Note: The crash data for SH-69 is from September 2001 (after improvements to the roadway were completed) to 2002. The crash data for Swan Falls Road is from 1998 through 2002.



## **SH-69**

The intersection of SH-69 and Deer Flats Road is the only location along the byway that experienced a higher than typical accident rate. However, due to the limited crash data for this location, monitoring of crashes should be continued to determine the need for any future improvements.

## **Swan Falls Road**

The geometrics at the intersection of Avalon and Swan Falls need improvement. This intersection is on a curve to the right with byway traffic turning left. This situation is difficult for motorists unfamiliar with the road. Realignment of this curve and intersection should be considered with future road projects at this location.

Additionally, the second curve north of Dedication Point has a compound radius on a sharp curve that drivers unfamiliar with this road will likely have difficulty negotiating. This is the highest point location of accidents along Swan Falls Road. Flattening this curve and providing a uniform radius is recommended.

## **Melba Loop**

Signing of the curves on the Melba Loop needs to be improved. Particularly, the sharp curves on Victory and McDermott Roads, which need advanced warning signs and arrows/chevrons located on the curves.

## ***Multi-Modal Transportation***

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The Western Heritage Historic Byway region will benefit from visits tourists make to the area. One group often overlooked is recreational cyclists.

The following characteristics make the byway a desirable location for recreational cyclists:

- The beauty of the surrounding area.
- Low vehicular traffic volumes.
- Adequate roadway facilities.

The byway has all three characteristics, providing the byway with the potential as a destination for cyclists. The third element, the roadway facilities for cyclists, could use improvements. Segments of the byway are certainly adequate for cyclists, but other segments need widening for the safety of these cyclists. The Western Heritage Historic Byway provides a good opportunity for long-distance touring, cycling events, and shorter recreational rides.

Wider shoulders have numerous benefits to the traveling public. They make the roadway safer for the vehicles, allowing more room as occasionally needed for evasive maneuvers, farm machinery, or disabled vehicles.







They allow room for pedestrians and they provide a safe buffer for bicyclists from the faster traveling motor vehicles. Most of the rural bicycle travel on the state highway system is accommodated on the paved roadway shoulders. The ideal dimension for a shoulder bikeway is six feet with a 12-foot travel lane; the minimum dimension is four feet with an 11-foot travel lane. The total pavement width minimum is then 30-feet. A painted fog line helps motorists keep adequate separation from the shoulder bikeway.

As maintenance projects are scheduled on segments of the byway, the Ada County Highway District, and City of Kuna should encourage shoulder widening as a part of these projects.



## 5. Marketing and Promotional Plan

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*“The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.”*

Steven Covey

The Western Historic Heritage Byway has not yet been discovered by many Idahoans or other visitors. It is a “best kept secret” to those that appreciate and enjoy the high desert amenities and a waiting treasure trove of new discoveries for others. The byway is in the midst of over 500,000 Treasure Valley residents, yet it is one of the least recognized—so far. A coordinated and focused marketing effort can attract new local, national, and international visitors.

A marketing and promotion plan is a very important part of the byway implementation strategies. Strategic activities should focus on bringing the byway’s historical, scenic, and geological assets to those who live here, as well as existing visitors and tourists from outside the region. Incremental and affordable marketing and promotion are available. Today, the State of Idaho is promoting tourism and over 20 state byways on the Internet (<http://www.visitid.org/Outdoor/drives1.html>).

### *A Market/Audience Profile*

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Tourism represents one of the most important activities in Idaho’s economy. The Idaho tourism, travel, and recreation industry has enjoyed steady growth over the past decade and continues to grow at a rate faster than that of Idaho’s overall economy. Interest in the state’s natural beauty will expand and the number of visitors will increase. Retired “baby boomers” will be searching for rich experiences away from urban noise and congestion. This puts the Western Heritage Historic Byway in a beneficial position to take advantage of the projected growth in the tourism industry and its easy access from Interstate 84.

### *Primary Market*

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Potential markets include residents of Kuna, Melba, Meridian, Nampa, Caldwell, Boise, and their visitors. Travel information can be marketed to heritage, nature, and cultural travelers. The primary market of the region is the Treasure Valley and those traveling Interstate 84 or US-95. Other potential markets include other areas throughout Idaho, and Oregon, California, Nevada, and Canada.



A target market worth pursuing will be heritage tourists, those who are seeking experiences that are real, authentic, and hands-on. Bird-watching is the second most popular passive sport in North America, with 30 million participants. Birds of prey, because of their relative rarity and array of fascinating adaptations, are of particular interest to birders and nature enthusiasts.



## *Marketing Goals*

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### **Goal 1—Increase the number of visitors to the byway.**

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Actions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Display current information about the byway on the Internet.</li><li>2. Prepare a byway brochure and distribute it at key locations (airport, rental car agencies, Chambers of Commerce, etc.).</li><li>3. Print placemats for local restaurants to promote awareness of the byway.</li><li>4. Generate familiarization tours for newspaper and magazine journalists and encourage them to write about the byway in their publications.</li><li>5. Write press releases for local newspapers and radio stations and encourage talk-show participation.</li></ol> |
|---------|---|

### **Goal 2—Increase visitor length of stay in the byway corridor.**

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Actions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Produce an audiotape tour that will heighten visitor interest in the byway's historical, cultural, natural, and scenic resources.</li><li>2. Develop an interpretive book that will encourage the visitor to spend more time on the byway.</li><li>3. Promote the development of new lodging, recreational activities, and events that will extend visitor stays.</li></ol> |
|---------|--|

### **Goal 3—Educate visitors about their role in protecting the environment and managing the byway's resources.**

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Actions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Produce a coloring book for children.</li><li>2. Promote the byway at local schools and civic groups.</li><li>3. Install interpretation at sites along the byway to better educate the visitor on protecting the resources.</li></ol> |
|---------|--|

### **Goal 4—Expand winter and off-season use along the byway.**

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Actions | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Improve byway site trail systems and encourage year-round use.</li><li>2. Target winter and off-season visitors including skiers and snowmobilers.</li></ol> |
|---------|---|

## *Marketing Strategy*

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Maintain a presence in the tourism marketplace through coordination with the Idaho Travel Meridian Chamber of Commerce, and the Boise Convention and Visitors Center. Several new promotional materials discussed below are proposed, including a Western Heritage Historic Byway guide, rack card, Internet web site, and audiotape/compact disc (CD). Other opportunities include developing strategies to increase use in the off-season.

### **Cooperative Byway Development Strategies**

Close coordination with other communities and groups is critical to developing a workable and effective byway marketing program. Coordinating the effort between all organizations will result in a more effective marketing program.



## **Hospitality Service**

Idaho is known for its friendly people. Visitors' memories of the byway will be influenced significantly by their encounters and experiences with local service providers. Business and agencies could benefit from assistance in developing good customer service and employee hospitality programs.

## ***Interpretive Materials***

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### **Postcards, Brochures, Posters, Placemats, Bench Mark Pins, and Coloring Book**

Attracting visitors to the byway can best be accomplished if various methods of interpretation are available. Postcards, brochures, posters, placemats, pins, and coloring books can be tailored to meet the needs of different audiences and located at information centers, Chambers of Commerce, and restaurants.

### **Western Heritage Historic Byway Guide**

A free interpretive brochure and map is an excellent method to gain wide information distribution to all interested agencies and organizations. The byway guide will draw visitors to the region and encourage extended stays. The guide could feature the 12 sites, as well as provide brief information about the sites, day trips, and events.

### **Rack Card**

A 4 x 9-inch color rack card would serve to lure visitors. Typically, four colors on one side and black and white on the other, it utilizes high quality photos and an eye-catching headline near the top of the card. The backside of the card would provide a small locator map, information, and contact information to request a packet of materials.

## ***Internet Web Site***

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A Web page is currently being set up for the Western Heritage Historic Byway. The site will be a major source of travel planning information throughout the region and world. The site will serve as an educational tool for residents and potential visitors alike. The site could include a virtual tour of the byway. It could also include a map of the corridor, photos, a description of the 12 sites, and an e-mail response form for users to request more information.

## ***Educational and Visitor Computer Linkages***

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Key byway sites could disseminate information to visitors through computer linkages to various resources in southwest Idaho. Potential portal sites could include the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Power Company, and the Kuna and Meridian Chambers of Commerce.

Computers at these sites, connected to an Internet browser would access information on the entire byway, with links to sites with much more detailed information. An online service at one of the portal sites could provide information on history, geology, nature, events, other facilities, accommodations, etc.



### *Audio Tour Development*

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For many visitors, an audio tour will increase the value of the byway experience. Visitors could obtain or borrow the tape/CD from the Meridian or Kuna Chambers of Commerce, Celebration Park, and other locales.

### *Initial Point Benchmark Pins and Byway Memorabilia*

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The Western Heritage Foundation is encouraged to refine the byway logo to promote public awareness of the byway. Potential products include small pin replicas and pewter medallions of the re-dedication of Initial Point. They could be cast and available as 3¼-inch paperweights, 1-inch pins, zipper pulls, and earrings. Other memorabilia could include trade goods, toys, folk art, pennants, and publications.



## 6. Byway Implementation

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*“Far and away the best prize life offers is the chance to  
work hard at work worth doing.”*

Theodore Roosevelt

Implementation of the byway vision requires time, diversity of resources, creativity, and continual local effort. The Byway Planning Team has produced the corridor management plan as a roadmap for the byway. The next step, and the most challenging, is to implement the plan. This chapter provides a matrix and discussion of organizational options and funding sources for continuing the byway work.

### *Byway Organization*

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Partnerships are the backbone of effective organizations. Most byway organizations find they need help to accomplish their goals. Broad support within the local region of the Western Heritage Historic Byway is a key to successful byway projects. By assuring that the implementation team is composed of varied interests and stakeholders, the likelihood of the plan's implementation is assured.

At this time the Western Heritage Foundation will continue to act as a central organizer and facilitator to assist with program management. The Western Heritage Historic Byway Corridor Management Plan will provide the foundation and its successors with an organized program, process, and schedule for infrastructure development along and adjacent to the byway. It is recommended that the management partnership or team meet quarterly.

A partnership of local and regional members who will implement the plan should be formalized in a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU is an agreement between all partners along the byway, including local, state, federal, and special interest groups. Currently, the byway does not have a well-developed, highly funded tourism development infrastructure. Most projects will need management by staff and volunteers. Therefore, it is equally important to create the organizational structure adequate to coordinate local and regional promotional programs, attract resources, and monitor byway progress. Some organizations that could be partners include:

- Ada County
- Ada County Highway District
- Ada County Parks and Recreation Department
- Ada County Sheriff
- Canyon County Park and Recreation Department
- City of Kuna
- City of Melba
- City of Meridian
- Idaho Department of Commerce
- Idaho Power Company





- Idaho State Historical Society
- Idaho Transportation Department
- Kuna Chamber of Commerce
- Kuna Historical Society
- Kuna Library
- Kuna School District
- Meridian Chamber of Commerce
- Snake River Raptor Volunteers, Inc.
- Southwest Idaho Travel Association
- U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Western Heritage Foundation

### ***Byway Investment Strategies***

This Corridor Management Plan outlines needed byway projects. A key component is marketing and promotional pieces. Pooled resources and cooperation will enable more effective programs than can be obtained by any single organization or community. Byway promoters should seek to “piggy-back” on existing marketing efforts, coordinating with state and regional partners in promotional efforts wherever possible. Other opportunities include public-private partnerships. Also proposed are strategies to utilize community resources that protect byway resources for future generations and enhance its value to each community.

### ***Byway Accommodations***

A current inventory of area motel guestrooms, bed and breakfast facilities, RV parks, and public campgrounds indicate a limited selection of lodging. At this time, all motel accommodations are found in Meridian; however, it is anticipated that Kuna and Melba will likely add lodging services in the future. Another unmet regional opportunity is guest ranches/lodges for “adventure” travel catering to sportsmen or families.

Name	Location
Holiday Inn Express & Suites	Meridian
Motel 6	Meridian
Mr. Sandman Motel	Meridian
Best Western Ramada Inn	Meridian
Microtel Inn & Suites	Meridian
Hampton Inn & Suites	Meridian
Celebration Park Campground	Snake River

### ***Downtown Revitalization***

A key strategy to improve and expand commercial services to support the byway is through establishing a regional Main Street program. The communities of Kuna, Melba, and Meridian have the potential to be strong attractions for visitors.

It is recommended that the Western Heritage Historic Byway Planning Management Team support the creation of a regional Main Street Program (modeled after the National Main Street Center’s four-point approach) to assist and advise byway towns on downtown revitalization techniques.



An initial component is hiring a Main Street manager to act as a circuit-rider coordinator, who would help renovate older buildings, promote special events, recruit new business and seek funding. Another area where Main Street can help is in assisting communities to improve their entryway. Kuna, Melba, and Meridian have weak, unattractive entryways. With the assistance from Main Street, community organizations and citizen volunteers can work together to plant trees, mow grass, maintain appropriate signage, and improve their entries. Funding can be sought to help downtown revitalization, historic preservation, entryway improvements, and other relevant community development programs.

### *Maintenance Strategy*

Adopt-a-Highway and Adopt-a-Byway site programs are recommended to help maintain the Western Heritage Historic Byway. Byway site maintenance includes trash collection, general site upkeep, vandalism repair, snow removal, graveling, and periodic grading of parking areas.

### **Adopt-a-Byway Site Program**

A key component of the byway is to encourage local adoption of the 12 byway sites. The program would be patterned after the successful Adopt-A-Highway program that helps pick up litter. The program would expand local awareness of the byway and its historic and natural assets. The program will create a stronger sense of local ownership for these sites and reduce maintenance costs. Similar programs elsewhere have shown that local volunteerism, particularly with youth, tends to reduce vandalism. Priority sites for Adopt-a-Byway Site include Kuna Cemetery, Kuna Cave, Initial Point, Dedication Point, and Swan Falls Dam.

### *Implementation Costs*

Detailed key site improvements and costs are found in Chapter 3. A summary of approximate costs for each site are included below. Please note that many site development costs are based on volunteer labor and land donations.

Site No.	Description	Estimated Development Costs
1	Byway Orientation Portal	\$438,500
2	Pioneer Cemetery/15-Mile Station	\$17,500
3	Kuna/Indian Creek Visitor Center	\$117,000
4	Silver Trail	\$31,000
5	Snake River BPNCA Pullout	\$18,000
6	Kuna Cave	\$41,500
7	Initial Point	\$150,000
8	Snake River BPNCA/Dedication Point*	\$1,190,000
9	Snake River BPNCA/Three Pole	\$50,000
10	Swan Falls Dam	\$125,000
11	Celebration Park	\$17,500
12	Melba Loop	\$57,000
Subtotal		<b>\$2,253,000</b>
Marketing		\$25,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$2,278,000</b>

\* Includes the BLM Visitor Center.



## *Funding Sources*

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The Western Heritage Historic Byway Planning Management Team will need to utilize a variety of funding sources to implement the Western Heritage Historic Byway Corridor Management Plan. The agencies and organizations represented on the planning committee will seek funding from a wide variety of sources, including federal, state, and local government agencies, grants, foundations, corporations, interest groups, service organizations, and the general public. One funding opportunity is the Public Lands Discretionary Funds where no match is required; other examples of funding opportunities include:

### **Surface Transportation Program (STP)**

This program, administered by the Idaho Transportation Department, provides funding for the reconstruction or rehabilitation of roadways on the state highway system. This includes interstate, U.S., and state highway routes. The funds originate from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which covers 92.66% of the costs of the project. These projects are identified and prioritized by ITD district engineers.

### **STP Local Rural**

The STP program is further divided into urban and rural elements. STP rural funds are allocated to local county road departments and highway districts. The ITD Board has designated a total of 6.3% of the total annual TEA-21 formula funding for local rural projects. Projects are selected through competitive application to the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC).

### **STP Safety**

Funds for projects to reduce accidents at identified hazardous locations and for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements are available through this program. Final selection of projects is by the Idaho Transportation Board. Evaluation of project sites is based upon an ITD safety review and a safety benefit to project cost ratio. Ten percent of the project costs will be paid by the sponsor.

### **STP Enhancement**

Enhancement funds are available for projects in 13 categories. Those relevant to the byway are: facilities for pedestrians and bicycles; acquisition of scenic easement and scenic or historic sites; scenic or historic highway programs including the provision of tourist or welcome centers; landscaping and other scenic beautification; historic preservation; control and removal of outdoor advertising; archaeological planning and research; and mitigation to address vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity. Projects are selected through an annual statewide application process and prioritized by the Enhancement Advisory Committee established by the Idaho Transportation Board.

### **Scenic Byway Program**

Funding is available for routes that have been designated as historic, scenic byways, or backcountry byways. All applications for road or enhancement work on the byway are made to the Idaho Transportation Board. ITD does not, however, make the decision on which projects will be funded. This decision is made through a nationally competitive process.



### **State Funded Program (ST)**

This program is for roadways on the state highway system. It has no federal participation. Generally, the projects in this program are smaller than federally funded projects, such as pavement resurfacing, or smaller bridge or safety projects. These projects need to be identified and prioritized by the ITD district engineers based upon roadway condition, public involvement, funding availability, and project costs. The Idaho Transportation Board makes the final decision and selection of these projects.

Idaho Transportation Department is the key player in the disbursement of funds for roadway projects. The committee needs to be an advocate for the recommended improvements for the Western Heritage Historic Byway. A primary goal should be to reinforce the value of the byway to southwest Idaho's economy. When a project is selected for funding, it is actively supported by a committed group of citizens and interest groups. There must be a need for the project, which must be adequately presented to ITD and supported with facts and figures. This process can be very political and time-consuming. The management team must maintain continuous and meaningful contact with elected officials, the ITD district staff, the planner, and district engineer for ITD, District 3, and the Idaho Transportation Board.

### **Idaho Department of Commerce**

Money is available through the Travel Grant Program, funded by a 2% lodging tax paid by travelers and collected by Idaho hotel, motel, and private campground owners. Its mission is to stimulate and expand the state's travel industry through local efforts and matching funds. Grant applications from non profit chambers of commerce, convention and visitors bureaus, and regional travel organizations are due the first Monday in June. Technical and marketing assistance is available to tourism suppliers interested in pursuing the international travel market.

### ***Priority of Projects***

The Western Heritage Historic Byway Planning Committee has prioritized the byway sites as follows:

<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Site #1–Byway Orientation Portal</li><li>▪ Site #3–Kuna/Indian Creek Visitor Center</li><li>▪ Site #5–Snake River BPNCA Pullout</li><li>▪ Site # 7–Initial Point</li><li>▪ Site #8–Snake River BPNCA/ Dedication Point</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Site #2–Pioneer Cemetery/15-Mile Station</li><li>▪ Site #6–Kuna Cave</li><li>▪ Site #9–Snake River BPNCA/ Three Pole</li><li>▪ Site #10–Swan Falls Dam</li><li>▪ Site #11–Celebration Park</li><li>▪ Site #12–Melba Loop</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Site #4–Silver Trail</li></ul>



## 7. Byway Evaluation

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Completion of the management plan is an important milestone but the work is not over. The management plan is a document to assist the communities along the byway in developing and maintaining this valuable economic resource. The plan defines the byway, makes suggestions for improvements, outlines a promotion and marketing strategy, and identifies responsibility for implementing the plan.

The planning team, comprised of local community leaders, needs to be a permanent committee—to periodically evaluate the plan and its implementation. Fortunately, the Western Heritage Foundation will be the initial byway management team, lending continuity and credibility to the byway effort. As site improvements are made to the byway, the management committee should re-evaluate and prioritize the remaining projects for each interpretive site.

### *Interpretive Site Assessments*

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All of the byway sites should be reviewed for meeting byway goals and quality of the visitor experience. Some of the items to be monitored include:

- Security
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Maintenance

The committee should evaluate the promotional activities and their effect on the economic success of the byway. The committee also needs to be an advocate with funding sources in order to accomplish the recommended projects.



In future years, this committee should also re-address the issue of becoming a National Scenic Byway. The advantages and disadvantages of this designation should be discussed. If national status is favorable to the communities along the byway, the committee could initiate an application to the Federal Highway Administration on behalf of the byway.

### *Impact Assessment*

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The byway management committee should keep abreast of the traffic patterns and their effect on the byway. The Idaho Transportation Department publishes traffic data annually on SH-69 and Swan Falls Road. The average daily traffic volumes for the segments and the accident records will be valuable in assessing the impact of improvements suggested by the byway plan.



Visitor studies underway and previously completed by the University of Idaho Department of Resource Recreation and Tourism are a source for evaluation of the byway's marketing strategies. A possible survey or questionnaire of visitors at locations on the byway could also provide information to the committee on the reception of the byway strategies.

### ***Byway Expansion***

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Periodically, the byway committee should review options for expanding the number of sites or the route of the Western Heritage Historic Byway. Due to popular interest, the Melba "loop" was added to the Western Heritage Historic Byway. New appropriate venues can add interest and new excitement to the byway.

### ***Annual Byway Status***

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A short report written by the byway committee should be published annually and submitted to Kuna, Melba, Meridian, and Ada and Canyon Counties, as well as interested and participating agencies. If feasible, the annual report should be provided to the newspaper and/or media for public review. This report should primarily address the progress of the recommended implementation strategies and any challenges facing the Western Heritage Historic Byway.

A yearly meeting is suggested for the byway committee. This would be a time to re-focus community attention to the byway and its value to the southwestern Idaho region. The work session, held by the committee, could be scheduled before the release of the annual report, allowing time to organize the committee and direct assignments to individual members. The annual meeting,

open to the public, could then be presented as a "State of the Byway" address to promote the progress and the value of the byway.